

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A ceramic article containing aluminum, silicon, and titanium in a total amount of at least 99 % by weight as reduced to the oxides ( $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3 + \text{SiO}_2 + \text{TiO}_2$ ), wherein the aluminum content is in the range of 70.0 – 99.5 % by weight calculated as  $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$ , the silicon content is in the range of 0.06 – 12 % by weight calculated as  $\text{SiO}_2$  and the titanium content is in the range of 0.08 – 30 % by weight calculated as  $\text{TiO}_2$ , and [[when]] the acid strength of the ceramic article is such that when it is exposed to a methyl red indicator of pKa +4.8, the methyl red indicator changes color to its acid color.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Currently amended) A method for the production of a ceramic article containing aluminum, silicon, and titanium in a total amount of at least 99 % by weight as reduced to the oxides ( $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3 + \text{SiO}_2 + \text{TiO}_2$ ) comprising calcining a mixture containing an aluminum compound, a silicon compound, and a titanium compound at a temperature in the range of 1,000°C - 2,000°C, wherein, [[when]] the acid strength of the ceramic article is such that when it is exposed to a methyl red indicator of pKa +4.8, the methyl red indicator changes color to its acid color.

4. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 3, wherein the aluminum content in said ceramic article is in the range of 70.0 – 99.5 % by weight calculated as  $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$ , the silicon content in said ceramic article is in the range of 0.06 – 12 % by weight calculated as  $\text{SiO}_2$  and the titanium content in the range of 0.08 – 30 % by weight calculated as  $\text{TiO}_2$  in said ceramic article.

5. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 3, wherein said aluminum compound is  $\alpha$ -alumina.

6. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 3, wherein said silicon compound and said titanium compound are capable of forming an amorphous layer of silica and titania by being calcined together.

7. (Original) A method according to claim 5, wherein said  $\alpha$ -alumina has an alumina crystal diameter in the range of  $0.1 - 5 \mu\text{m}$ , a particle diameter in the range of  $50 - 100 \mu\text{m}$ , and a BET specific surface area in the range of  $0.1 - 4 \text{ m}^2/\text{g}$ .

8-22. (Canceled)